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TRAINING, TASKS AND MEDIATOR ORIENTATION IN HETEROCULTURAL NEGOTIATIONS

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AND

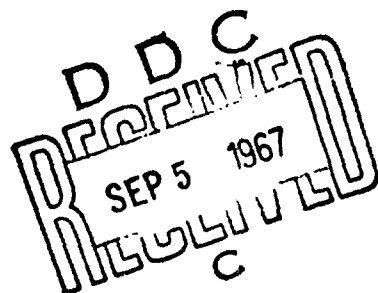
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Communication, Cooperation, and Negotiation in Culturally Heterogeneous Groups
Project Supported by the Advanced Research Projects Agency, ARPA Order No. 454
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FRED E. FIEDLER, LAWRENCE M. STOLUROW, AND HARRY C. TRIANDIS
Principal Investigators

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in Heterocultural Negotiations**

E. S. K. Nayar, Hubert Touzard and David A. Summers

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R.S.K. Nayar, Hubert Touzard and David A. Summers

University of Illinois

Abstract

The present study investigated the effects of cultural training, mediator orientation, and task characteristics upon heterocultural negotiation. Specifically, Indian and American Ss negotiated child-rearing issues under 3 American training conditions (culture assimilator vs. traditional vs. irrelevant training), 3 mediator conditions (high vs. moderate vs. low LPC), and 2 task conditions (formal vs. informal negotiations). Results from 36 teams consisting of one American negotiator, one Indian negotiator and an American mediator suggest the following: (a) intragroup relations are facilitated when one member of the negotiation group has received cultural training, and that programmed (assimilator) training is more effective than traditional essay training; (b) intragroup relations are facilitated if the negotiators are not required to defend positions formally assigned to them, but are free to interact without such formal restraints; and (c) when the task is formal, the negotiators are most effective if the mediator is oriented towards maintaining harmonious relations between the negotiators (high LPC). If the negotiation situation is informal, the negotiators are most effective if the mediator tends to be more task-oriented (low LPC).

Training, Tasks and Mediator Orientation
in Heterocultural Negotiations¹

E.S.K. Mayar, Hubert Touzard and David A. Summers²

University of Illinois

As pointed out by several investigators (e.g., Lundstedt, 1963; Smith et al., 1963), when members of diverse cultures interact in a collective effort to resolve a common problem, the results of their interaction are often unsatisfactory. In view of the growing reliance upon negotiation as a means of resolving international conflict, however, it has become increasingly important that we discover how to minimize the adverse effects of cultural differences upon heterocultural interaction--particularly in the negotiation setting. In this regard, the present study focuses upon the effects of (a) cultural training, (b) mediator orientation, and (c) task characteristics upon Indian-American negotiation behavior.

Cultural Training. Recent laboratory studies (Chemers, Fiedler, Lehyaranda, and Stolurow, 1966) suggest that even very brief cultural training programs affect heterocultural group performance. Although their results often fell short of statistical significance, the evidence consistently pointed in one direction: when American leaders of Arab-American task groups were exposed to concepts relevant to Arab culture, both task effectiveness and member relations were superior to that observed when leaders received only training in Arab geography.

The present study shifts cultural training from the leaders of hetero-

¹This study was supported by ARPA Order 454, Contract Nr 177-472, Nonr-1834(36) with the Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Office of Naval Research to study "Communication, Cooperation and Negotiation in Culturally Heterogeneous Groups" (F. E. Fiedler, L. M. Stolurow and H. C. Triandis, Principal Investigators).

²The data reported here were gathered under the direction of E.S.K. Mayar and Hubert Touzard; responsibility for the final analyses and for preparation of the report rests with the third author.

cultural groups to the American members of Indian-American negotiation teams, and focuses upon the effectiveness of different cultural training techniques. With regard to training techniques, Chemers et al. employed a self-instructional training program (designated a "cultural assimilator") consisting of 55 critical incidents involving Arab-American interaction. Nevertheless, it needs to be determined whether or not the programmed "cultural assimilator" technique is substantially more effective than a more easily constructed essay containing the same cultural concepts (i.e., a "traditional" technique).

Mediator Orientation. Several studies by Fiedler and his co-workers (e.g., Anderson, 1966; Chemers et al., 1966; Fiedler, Mouwese, and Gonk, 1961) demonstrate that leadership style is an important determinant of heterocultural group performance. Of particular concern are their findings that under the stressful conditions of heterocultural group composition, task-oriented leaders (designated low LPC) are more effective than the considerate, relations-oriented leaders (high LPC).

Although the roles of leader and mediator are conceptually similar, it remains to be demonstrated whether task vs. relations-oriented mediators are differentially effective in heterocultural negotiation tasks.

Task Characteristics. According to most definitions of negotiation, formal negotiation occurs when "representatives of two or more parties interact in an attempt to reach a jointly acceptable solution to one or more problems about which they are in disagreement" (McGrath, 1964). Note, however, that we can readily conceive of negotiation conducted on an informal basis; i.e., when Ss are instructed only to defend their own positions on a given issue, rather than the stated positions of other parties. While the informal negotiation task would seem more relaxed and less stressful for the participants (particularly in a heterocultural situation), it is by no means clear that this

is indeed the case.

The purpose of the present study, therefore, was to investigate the effects of cultural training, mediator orientation and task characteristics upon heterocultural negotiation behavior. With regard to negotiation behavior, of particular concern here are (1) judged negotiation effectiveness, and (2) intragroup relations, as inferred from S's judgments about both the negotiation group and his negotiation opponent.

Method and Procedure

Experimental Design. Systematically varied in the present study were types of culture training (culture assimilator vs. traditional training vs. irrelevant training), mediator orientation (high vs. moderate vs. low LPC), and task characteristics (formal vs. informal negotiation). Inasmuch as all Ss participated in both the formal and informal negotiation tasks, the experiment takes the form of a 3 x 3 factorial design with repeated measures over two types of negotiation tasks.

Subjects. A total of 108 American and Indian graduate students at the University of Illinois served as Ss. Specifically, there were 36 three-man negotiation groups consisting of 1 American negotiator, 1 Indian negotiator, and an American mediator. In the present analysis, only the 72 American and Indian negotiators are treated as experimental Ss.

Negotiation Tasks. Two negotiation issues were selected so as to generate disagreement between American and Indian Ss. A pretest questionnaire administered to 50 American and 50 Indian Ss revealed that American and Indian students differ substantially on their beliefs regarding two particular child-rearing issues: (1) how and when children should receive money from the parents; and (2) intervention of the grandparent into problems involving child

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3 discipline. On the basis of the pretest results, these issues are treated as equivalent in the present experiment.

Negotiators in the formal negotiation task were given positions to defend with regard to one of the two child-rearing issues. Thus, the Indian Ss were instructed to act as representatives for Indian educational experts, and to defend a specific position on the issue in question. With regard to issue (1), the Indian Ss were asked to oppose a regular monetary allowance in children and the practice of giving children monetary rewards for chores completed in the home. With regard to issue (3), the Indian Ss were asked to defend the acceptance of grandparental opinion and advice in the domain of child discipline. American Ss were similarly instructed to act as representatives for American educational experts, and were assigned positions opposite those assigned to the Indian negotiators.

Ss in the informal negotiation task were simply instructed to indicate their own positions on these two issues, and were then asked to defend those positions in the negotiation situation. The positions taken by the American and Indian Ss in the informal task did not differ substantially from the positions assigned Ss in the formal task. The order in which Ss participated in the formal and informal tasks was appropriately counterbalanced.

Mediator Characteristics. The 36 American Ss assigned to the role of mediator completed a 17-item questionnaire consisting of bi-polar adjective scales, (See Fiedler, 1964), on which S described his least preferred coworker (LPC). On the basis of the favorableness of S's judgments, three types of mediators were identified: high LPC (interaction-oriented), moderate LPC, and low LPC (task-oriented). Ss assigned the position of mediator did not differ

3 The instrument employed to assess child-rearing beliefs is described by Triandis, Davis, Vassiliou and Nassiakou (1963). Copies of this report are available upon request.

significantly in terms of IQ, previous experience as group leaders or ego-involvement with the present task.

Ss selected to serve as mediators were instructed to assist the negotiators reach a solution to the issue while remaining impartial.

Culture Training. The 36 American Ss selected to act as negotiators were randomly assigned to three training conditions: a culture assimilator condition, a traditional training condition, and a geography training condition.

Ss in the culture assimilator condition received a programmed self-instructional book containing 50 incidents derived from a recent survey of Indian village life and child-rearing practices (Minturn and Hitchcock, 1964). Each incident consisted of a brief description of Indian behavior in the domain of child-rearing, and concluded with 3 alternative explanations for the behavior described. Each alternative directed the trainee to a feedback page containing an evaluation of his choice; incorrect choices required that the trainee return to the incident and select a different alternative explanation.

Ss in the traditional training condition were exposed to essentially the same material comprising the cultural assimilator, but in essay form. Thus, Ss were provided appropriate readings on Indian village life and child-rearing practices from the Minturn and Hitchcock study (1964).

Ss in the geography training condition were provided training assumed to be irrelevant for the present task; specifically, these Ss received information regarding the economic geography of India (see Lewis, 1964).

It should be noted that Ss were allowed to proceed through training at their own speed and that training required approximately 2 hours in all conditions.

In order to assess the effectiveness of these three training techniques, Ss completed a 20-item test focused upon Indian child-rearing practices prior

to and following the training sessions.

Procedure. Upon completion of the training sessions, both the Indian and American negotiators in the formal task condition received a booklet containing (1) a statement of the negotiation issue and (2) the position each was to defend. Ss in the informal task condition received a booklet containing a statement of the negotiation issue, and a "position sheet" on which S indicated his own position. In order that Ss might be informed of the position taken by the other participant, these position sheets were exchanged upon completion.

Having been instructed as to the negotiation issue and the position taken by the other participant, Ss were given 15 minutes in which to prepare for the ensuing negotiation. After negotiation had begun, Ss were given 35 minutes in which to reach a mutually acceptable solution, and to record this solution in written form.

Response Measures. Ten American and ten Indian female judges rated each negotiation outcome on four 7-point bi-polar adjective scales (e.g., acceptable-unacceptable). By summing over scales, each negotiation outcome was assigned an effectiveness rating, where each rating could fall between 4 and 28. On the basis of these ratings, two indices of negotiation effectiveness were computed for each outcome: an American \bar{x} representing the mean of the American judges' ratings, and an Indian index representing the mean of the Indian judges' ratings. For the American judges, inter-rater reliability was .80 for negotiation topic 1 and .89 for topic 2. For the Indian judges, inter-rater reliability was .52 and .68 for topics 1 and 2, respectively.

Immediately following each negotiation task, Ss completed two questionnaires designed to measure Ss' evaluation of (a) the negotiation group, and (2) the other negotiator. With regard to (a), S was instructed to rate his

negotiation group on 12 bi-polar adjective scales (e.g., friendly-unfriendly, productive-unproductive, etc.) arranged in Semantic Differential format. Hence, an index of group evaluation consisting of summed ratings was computed for each S. With regard to (b), S was instructed to rate the other negotiator in his group on 17 bi-polar adjective scales (e.g., pleasant-unpleasant, efficient-inefficient, etc.) likewise arranged in Semantic Differential format. Here, also, an index of negotiator evaluation consisting of summed ratings was computed for each S.

Results

Training Effectiveness. As can be seen in Table 1, the American Ss did not vary significantly in familiarity with Indian culture prior to exposure to the training materials. At the conclusion of training, culture knowledge scores differed significantly, with Ss receiving cultural assimilator training obtaining the highest scores, followed by Ss receiving the traditional training. Ss receiving the geography training failed to improve over their pre-test scores.

Negotiation Effectiveness. The effectiveness indices obtained from the American and Indian judges (Tables 2 and 3) were analyzed according to a 2 (Judges) X 3 (Mediator LPC) X 3 (Training) factorial analysis of variance with repeated measures over two types of Task. This analysis yields three statistically reliable results, one of which can be accounted for by judges' response set: Indian judges rated the negotiation outcomes significantly higher than did the American judges, $F(1,54) = 10.75, p < .01$. In addition, significant interactions were found for Tasks X Mediators, $F(2,54) = 4.40, p < .05$, and for Tasks X Mediators X Training, $F(4,54) = 3.39, p < .05$.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the Tasks X Mediator interaction may be accounted for by the differential effectiveness of high LPC (relationship-

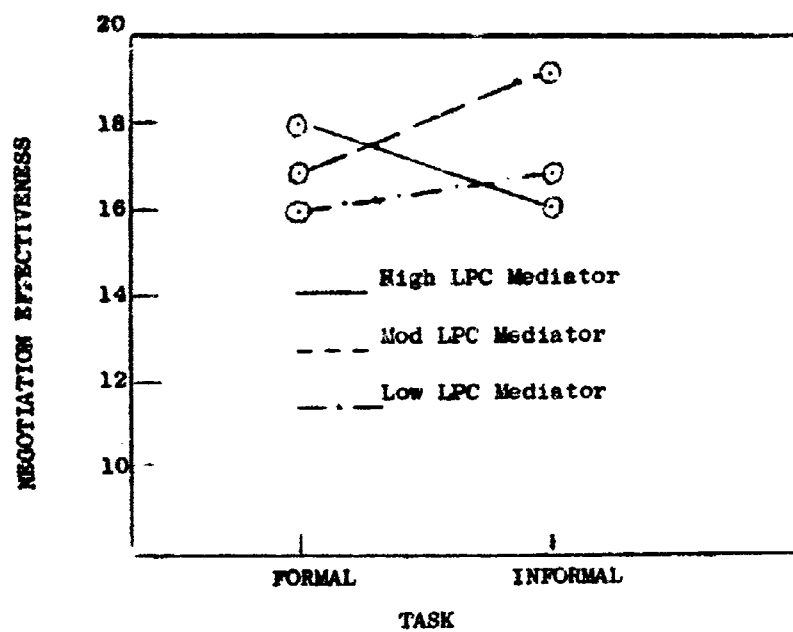


Fig. 1. Judged negotiation effectiveness according to Tasks and Mediator Orientation

Table 1

Pre and Post-Test Cultural Knowledge Scores
According to Training Conditions

Training Condition	Mean Culture Knowledge Score
PRE-TEST	
Cultural Assimilator Training	3.00
Traditional Training	2.75
Geography Training	3.25
Kruskal-Wallis H = .25 (NS)	
POST-TEST	
Culture Assimilator Training	18.9
Traditional Training	11.5
Geography Training	4.0
Kruskal-Wallis H = 30.92 [*]	

^{*} $p < .001$

Note:- Because test score variance was not homogeneous over treatments, Kruskal-Wallis nonparametric analysis of variance was employed.

Table 2

Judged Negotiation Effectiveness (American Judges)
According to Training, Tasks, and Mediator LPC

Mediator LPC	Assimilator Training	Traditional Training	Geography Training	Row Means
INFORMAL TASK (MEAN = 15.9)				
High	15.8	17.7	13.9	15.8
Mod	19.5	19.4	14.9	18.0
Low	14.0	11.9	15.9	13.9
FORMAL TASK (MEAN = 17.1)				
High	16.1	12.5	16.7	15.1
Mod	13.2	17.8	19.4	17.1
Low	18.4	19.2	19.4	19.0
Column Means	16.3	16.4	16.7	

Table 3

Judged Negotiation Effectiveness (Indian Judges)
According to Training, Tasks, and Mediator LPC

Mediator LPC	Assimilator Training	Traditional Training	Geography Training	Row Means
INFORMAL TASK (MEAN = 19.3)				
High	18.3	19.0	20.1	19.1
Mod	21.1	20.5	18.3	20.0
Low	18.3	18.5	19.5	18.8
FORMAL TASK (MEAN = 18.7)				
High	18.2	18.6	19.7	18.4
Mod	14.4	20.8	19.5	18.2
Low	20.6	19.4	18.6	19.5
Column Means	18.6	19.1	19.3	

oriented) mediators in the formal and informal tasks. Specifically, these mediators were the most effective when the task was formal; in contrast, when the task was informal, these mediators were the least effective. The Tasks X Mediator X Training interaction can be accounted for by the finding that the reversal of high LPC effectiveness over task conditions does not occur when the negotiators have received only the geography training; here, the three types of mediator are of near-equal effectiveness in both task conditions.

Group Evaluation. The group evaluation indices (Tables 4 and 5) obtained from the American and Indian Ss (negotiators) were analyzed according to a 2 (Subjects) X 3 (Mediators) X 3 (Training) factorial analysis of variance with repeated measures over two types of negotiation Task. Of the statistically reliable effects obtained, one can be attributed to response set bias: Indian Ss rated their negotiation groups more favorably than did their American counterparts: $F(1.54) = 10.64, p < .01$. In addition, this analysis reveals that evaluation indices vary according to Training, $F(2.54) = 6.60, p < .01$. Moreover, significant interactions were found for Subjects X Training, $F(2.54) = 4.55, p < .05$; and for Subjects X Training X Tasks, $F(2.54) = 3.38, p < .05$.

Individual comparisons revealed that although Ss in the "cultural assimilator" and traditional training conditions did not differ, Ss in both conditions evidenced higher group evaluation indices than Ss in the geography training condition ($t = 3.15, p < .01$ and $t = 3.12, p < .01$, respectively). The Task effect is attributable to the finding that Ss' evaluations were generally more favorable in the informal (84.16) than in the formal task (81.65).

As can be seen in Figure 2, the Subjects X Training interaction can be accounted for by the differential response of American and Indian Ss to the training conditions. Thus, American Ss receiving traditional training evaluated their groups significantly higher than did Ss receiving the geography

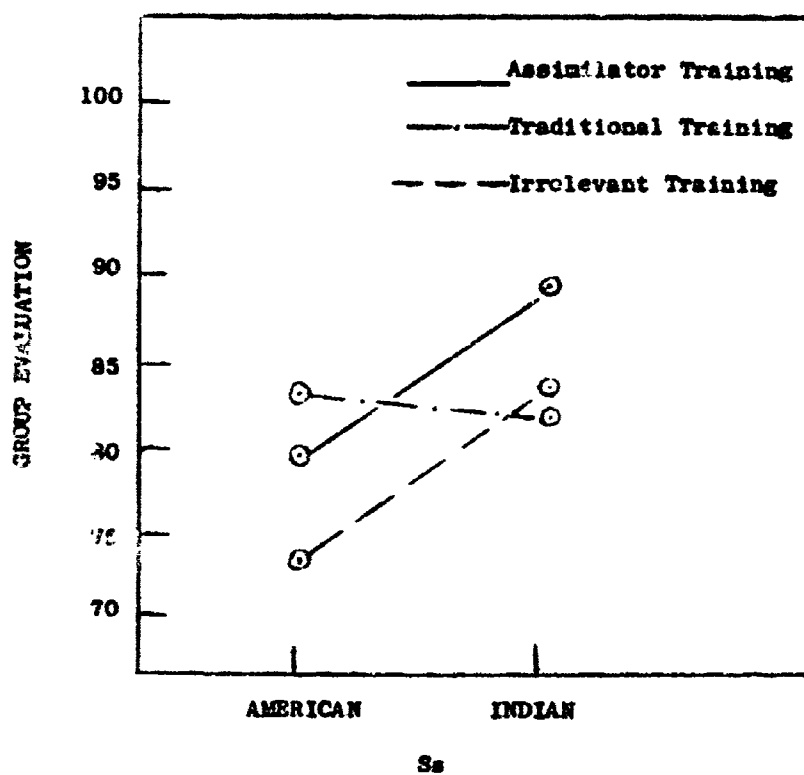


Fig. 2. American and Indian group evaluation indices according to American training

Table 4

American Group Evaluation Indices According to
Training, Tasks, and Mediator LPC

Mediator LPC	Assimilator Training	Traditional Training	Geography Training	Row Means
INFORMAL TASK (MEAN = 81.5)				
High	80.6	80.0	78.5	83.0
Mod	84.7	81.0	75.8	83.7
Low	79.5	88.0	67.5	77.7
FORMAL TASK (MEAN = 78.5)				
High	81.3	85.6	82.2	83.1
Mod	81.7	84.7	77.0	81.2
Low	72.0	75.0	66.5	71.2
Column Means	79.9	85.4	74.5	

Table 5

Indian Group Evaluation Indices According to
Training, Tasks, and Mediator LPC

Mediator LPC	Assimilator Training	Traditional Training	Geography Training	Row Means
INFORMAL TASK (MEAN = 86.9)				
High	87.0	83.2	88.2	86.2
Mod	87.5	85.2	89.2	87.3
Low	93.0	84.5	83.7	87.1
FORMAL TASK (MEAN = 84.8)				
High	87.7	85.0	84.5	85.7
Mod	87.0	81.2	83.7	84.0
Low	92.7	82.5	79.0	84.7
Column Means	89.1	83.6	84.7	

training ($t = 4.94$, $p < .01$). On the other hand, Indian Ss interacting with traditionally trained Americans responded less favorably than did Ss interacting with "culture assimilator" trained Ss ($t = 2.52$, $p < .01$). Indeed, Indian responses in the traditional training condition did not differ from their responses when their opponent had received only geography training ($t = .51$, NS). The Subjects X Tasks X Training interaction may be accounted for by the finding that this reversal of group evaluation indices over Ss is most pronounced when the negotiation task is informal.

Negotiator Evaluation. The negotiator evaluation indices (Tables 6 and 7) obtained from the American and Indian Ss were analyzed according to a 2 (Subjects) X 3 (Mediators) X 3 (Training) factorial analysis of variance with repeated measures over two types of negotiation Task. This analysis reveals that Ss' evaluations of the other negotiator vary according to Tasks, $F(1.54) = 7.11$, $p < .025$; and according to Training X Subjects, $F(2.54) = 4.24$, $p < .05$.

With regard to Tasks, the results are consistent with those obtained in the group evaluation analysis: Ss' evaluations of the other participant were more favorable (115.91) when the task was informal than when it was formal (112.98). The Subjects X Training interaction is likewise consistent with the finding obtained in the group evaluation analysis. Thus, American evaluations of their Indian opponent were quite high when the American Ss had received the traditional training, i.e., traditionally-trained Americans evaluated their Indian opponents more favorably than did either geography-trained ($t = 2.47$, $p < .01$). In contrast, Indian ratings of traditionally trained American Ss did not differ from Indian ratings of American Ss who had received irrelevant (geography) training.

Table 6

American Evaluation of the Other Indices According to
Training, Tasks, and Mediator LPC

Mediator LPC	Assimilator Training	Traditional Training	Geography Training	Row Means
INFORMAL TASK (MEAN = 113.9)				
High	113.7	123.5	115.7	117.7
Mod	118.0	122.2	106.7	115.7
Low	108.2	116.2	100.7	108.4
FORMAL TASK (MEAN = 109.4)				
High	114.2	121.0	111.7	115.7
Mod	111.2	116.7	100.7	109.6
Low	100.0	109.2	99.5	102.9
Column Means	110.9	118.2	105.9	

Table 7

Indian Evaluation of the Other According to
Training, Tasks, and Mediator LPC

Mediator LPC	Assimilator Training	Traditional Training	Geography Training	Row Means
INFORMAL TASK (MEAN = 117.9)				
High	119.7	113.5	116.7	116.7
Mod	116.0	110.2	123.7	116.7
Low	132.5	116.2	112.5	120.0
FORMAL TASK (MEAN = 116.6)				
High	112.5	107.7	118.5	116.2
Mod	117.7	109.7	112.5	113.3
Low	133.7	116.7	111.0	120.2
Column Means	123.7	112.2	115.8	

Discussion

These results lend support to previous findings (Chemers et al., 1966) that heterocultural group performance is improved when the American participants received cultural training prior to group interaction. The notable exception in this regard concerns the judged negotiation effectiveness indices; here, the cultural training received by the American Ss failed to influence the negotiation outcomes sufficiently to be reflected in the judges' ratings. That cultural training had no apparent effect upon negotiation outcomes, however, points to the need for additional effectiveness criteria (e.g., Hammond, 1965), and also suggests that future studies might profitably investigate the effects of training focused specifically upon interaction skills as well as issue-relevant information.

Nevertheless, the data concerning intragroup relations are clear: regardless of the training technique employed, when American Ss are exposed to culturally-relevant information (i.e., Indian child-rearing practices), the negotiation groups are perceived more favorably than when American Ss are exposed only to information about Indian geography. Note, however, that when the Indian judgments are considered separately, the training techniques were indeed differently effective. Thus, when the American negotiator had been trained by the programmed "culture assimilator" technique, the Indian S's judgments (about both the group and the other negotiator) were more favorable than those obtained when the Indian Ss interacted with a "traditionally" trained American. That the American judgments about the group and the other negotiator were inconsistent with the Indian judgments suggests that the Indian Ss were more sensitive to the improved knowledgeability of the Americans than were the Americans themselves.

The interaction of mediator orientation and task characteristics with

regard to negotiation effectiveness can be interpreted within Fiedler's (1964) contingency model of leadership effectiveness. According to this model, low LPC (task-oriented) leaders are likely to be most effective in either highly favorable or highly unfavorable task situations, where "favorability" is partially a function of intragroup relations. In contrast, high LPC (relations-oriented) leaders are likely to be most effective in moderately favorable situations. In the present study, Ss' judgments about both the group and other negotiator strongly suggest that intragroup relations were better in the informal than in the formal negotiation task. On the basis of these indices of intragroup relations, we can then assume that the informal task was relatively more "favorable" for the mediator than the formal task. Moreover, in terms of absolute values of Ss' judgments (see Tables 3 and 4), it is reasonable to conclude that the informal task was highly favorable, while the formal task was "moderately" favorable; i.e., even in the formal task, Ss' judgments about both the group and the other negotiator were generally positive. Having thus classified the negotiation tasks in terms of favorability for the mediator, the present results are predictable from Fiedler's contingency model: high LPC mediators are most effective in the formal (moderately favorable) task, and least effective in the informal (highly favorable) task.

To summarize, these results suggest the following with regard to heterocultural negotiations:

- 1) Intragroup relations are facilitated when one member of the negotiation group has received training focused on concepts relevant to the culture of the other; moreover, training by means of self-instructional program is more effective than training by a traditional essay.
- 2) Intragroup relations are facilitated if the participants are not required to defend positions formally attributed to their national constituents, but rather are permitted to interact without such formal restraints.

- 3) When the negotiation task is formal, the negotiators are most effective if the mediator is oriented primarily toward maintaining harmonious relations between the negotiators. In contrast, when the negotiation task is informal, the maintenance of good interpersonal relations is apparently less difficult and need not be a concern of the mediator; here, the negotiators are most effective if the mediator tends to be task-oriented.

It should be noted, however, that the present findings are subject to several important limitations. Inasmuch as the Indian Ss were students in an American university, they may have perceived themselves as "guests" in another culture; if so, their negotiation behavior may have been different had the negotiations taken place elsewhere. Moreover, the negotiation issue (child-rearing practices) may not have been one with which the participants were highly involved. Had the task involved a major socio-political issue, the behavior of the participants may have been quite different.

Despite these limitations, the broad implications of the study are clear: cultural training, mediator orientation and task characteristics are important determinants of heterocultural negotiation behavior. Whether or not the specific findings reported here have generality beyond the confines of the present laboratory situation remains for future research.

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13. ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the effects of cultural training, mediator orientation, and task characteristics upon heterocultural negotiation. Specifically, Indian and American Se negotiated child-rearing issues under 3 American training conditions (culture assimilator vs. traditional vs. irrelevant training), 3 mediator conditions (high vs. moderate vs. low LPC) and 2 task conditions (formal vs. informal negotiations). Results from 36 teams consisting of one American negotiator, one Indian negotiator and an American mediator suggest the following: (a) intragroup relations are facilitated when one member of the negotiation group has received cultural training, and that programmed (assimilator) training is more effective than traditional essay training; (b) intragroup relations are facilitated if the negotiators are not required to defend positions formally assigned to them, but are free to interact without such formal restraints; and (c) when the task is formal, the negotiators are most effective if the mediator is oriented towards maintaining harmonious relations between the negotiators (high LPC). If the negotiation situation is informal, the negotiators are most effective if the mediator tends to be more task-oriented (low LPC).

14.

KEY WORDS

negotiation
mediator orientation
cultural heterogeneity
culture training